

Adventures In Evil Zombieland 2038

Season 1

Todd Borho

Episode 1

Water Credits

I just woke up 2 minutes ago, 7am on the dot, like always, because of my stupid, authoritarian drone's siren going off.

A drone, hovering nearby, says mechanically, "You will be docked one credit for insulting your personal security assistant."

You might be wondering, what's a personal security assistant? In the year 2038, every tax slave, like me and most other people, have a government mandated drone follow us around 24/7.

Even in the bathroom, you say?

That's right, even when I'm droppin a G-man in the toilet, I've got a man made birdbot watching my every move.

It's also a mandate from the scientific dictatorship that everyone gets up at 7am.. So I'm up, against my will, of course. Anyway, time to wake up. Time for a shower.

"You have used all of your water credits for this month," the drone informs me dryly.

"That's not possible! There must be some mistake!"

Floating big brother says, "Science doesn't make mistakes."

Damn water rations! For the earth, of course. Ha ha ha, joke's on us slaves. No shower. I'd better be careful when I'm in public. If I have what any tax slave considers to be an "undesirable odor" I can lose points on my social credit score.

"You will be fined 2 credits for using abusive language towards a state mandate."

"Doesn't your battery ever run out?"

Maybe I'll ask my neighbor if I can shower over there. I don't think they ever go over their limit.

Knock, knock.

"Who's there?"

"Your good 'ol neighbor, neighbor."

"I'm busy right now."

"Please, I used up my water ration and I really need a shower."

My neighbor's shaky voice continues, "Well, your social credit score has been dipping lately, and I can't afford to be associated with you. Besides, sharing water is illegal, ya know."

Ok, I'm giving up on the shower. Guess I'll have some coffee to comfort myself.

In my tiny smart kitchen I find something beyond disturbing. No coffee! Looks like it's gonna be one of those days. I'll run across the street to a coffee shop and get my fix.

"Running across the street is forbidden."

"It was a figure of speech, you tyrannical bolt pile!"

So now I'm at the coffee shop. "I'll have a large, black coffee, for here, please," I tell the humanoid robot that has all the charming looks of a junkyard.

"Scan eyes here, please."

I scan my eyes into the pulsing red circle in the middle of the robot's chest.

"I'm sorry, it appears that you don't have any Yudollrubpounds left in your account."

Red faced, I turn to my drone, "Can't you put off robbing my account until tomorrow?"

"The government doesn't rob, it appropriates."

"You didn't answer my question."

Stark silence.

I turn back to the heartless coffee cashier. "Isn't there something you can do? Or that I can do?"

"You could go see a benevolent financier at the World Bank and possibly take out a high interest loan."

I kick the ground and walk out. A loan for coffee. What has the world come to?

I know what I'll do. I'll go down to the United Nations Department of Water and Trash Collection and see if there wasn't an error in my water usage this month.

"Please be advised, you only have two travel credits left."

I facepalm.

Ok, so two credits will get me to the water department, but then I'll have to walk home. It's only about 8 miles. It'll be fine.

After waiting 45 minutes for an economy autonomous vehicle to arrive, I get zipped over to the water department of the scientific dictatorship. The poorer you are, the more you wait.

I stroll into the shiny glass tower and walk up to the robot receptionist. "I'm here to file a complaint."

A stretchy female face shows mock concern, "I'm sorry, but we are not accepting any more complaints today. Can I help you with something else?"

Thanks to my phenomenally quick wit, I come up with, "Yes, I'd like to speak to a human technocrat so I can shower them with praise."

A forced smile is unleashed from the sitting pile of circuits, "Are you lying?"

I gulp, "No, I'd never lie to a benevolent tool of authoritarianism like you."

Luckily, robots haven't progressed to the point where they can detect sarcasm yet.

"Very well, you're in luck. We have a few praise openings left. Please take a seat."

I take a profoundly uncomfortable seat next to a blank-faced old man. "Why are government seats always made of metal? Do you ever wonder that?"

Lobster eyes dance off my face and then dart away, "Oh no, sonny, I don't wonder."

I huff and roll my eyes. "Hey old man, you're old enough to remember the days when we didn't have to ration water. In fact, lots of people even had their own private water sources, something called 'wells', I think. Do you remember, old man?"

He looks at me blankly, "Oh no, sonny, I don't remember that. I only remember what's necessary."

I shiver, "You got that vaccine with the chip in it, didn't you, old man?"

He gives a goofy grin, "Oh yes, and now I'm so much happier."

I cringe and scoot over a seat. Damn vaccines. Damn brainchips.

My drone speaks up, "You will be fined 3 credits. One for a derogatory statement about vaccines, another for your brainchips comment, and another for the 'P' word."

Oh, brother. I forgot, the word 'private' is forbidden.

The drone drones on, "Due to your lack of Yudollrubpounds in your account, you will need to take a loan from a benevolent financier at the World Bank."

Yeah, yeah, yeah, not right now. I've gotta settle this water score first.

After waiting 3 hours.....

"NEXT!" screams a lizard-eyed, puffy cheeked parasite from her cushy perch on high. I swagger up to the parasite and take a seat. "Good morning, mind-controlled parasite. Are those contacts that make your eyes look so irresistibly lizard-like?"

She blushes, "Oh, you noticed. Why yes, they're the new augmented reality type. I'm actually on a beach right now sipping a beverage with a little umbrella."

Note to self. If you insult someone, then follow it with a compliment. It increases the chances of not facing repercussions for the insult.

"Does that make your evil job, stealing money and working for a merciless technocracy, easier to handle morally, pretending you're on a beach with the aid of some high tech gadgetry? By the way, I LOVE your holographic necklace!"

"Oh, why thank you! I always love these praise sessions!" she squawks.

"Actually, I'm here because I'm out of water credits and I need to take a shower."

Her cheeks puff out more and she says smugly, "That's funny, it says here that you came in for a praise session."

"Nope. I lied just to get past the tyrannical robot at the reception desk."

She squirms, "Oh, well, I'm afraid I can't help you. If you need more water credits, we can't do anything for you here."

I stare at her for a moment to see if she's at all aware of the irony of her statement. "But this is the water department, right?"

"Yes."

"And you can't help me get more water?"

"Oh, no, not here," she giggles.

I facepalm and sigh, "Would you be a good little authoritarian parasite and tell me where I can get more water? That blouse really brings out your eyes."

"I suppose you could try and do what the managerial class does. They just get more Yudollrubpounds from the World Bank and buy more water credits."

"Is that what you do?" I ask anxiously.

"Oh, you betcha! I've never run out of water. You'll never get a loan, though. Your social credit score is way too low for that. If you'd watch your tongue more, then maybe you could get a loan one day. But today it's pretty much hopeless."

I narrow my eyes, "It's hopeless because billions of mind-controlled order-following ignorant stooges like you violently control and rob people! Not too many years ago, people actually used to have private water supplies. There, I said it! PRIVATE!"

I look up at my ever-present drone, "Go ahead and rob me, you satanic tool! Private! Private! Private!"

I turn back to lizard-eyes, "And people used to have freedom of speech, too!"

She cackles, "Oh, such silly myths! Private water! Freedom of speech!"

I look up at the parasite's drone and yell, "Well, aren't you going to fine her! She said private!"

Lizard-eyes twists her head and says, "Oh, I can't get fined for that. I was just refuting your silly antics. This meeting is over. Bye-bye!"

I stand up and start stomping. Before getting out of her sight, I turn around, "I will get more water this month, you'll see! I'll get that loan from those occult demon banksters! Just you watch!"

So now I'm walking 8 miles home. No time to try for the loan today. The banksters close up shop at 2pm. I'll try my luck with them another day. See you then!

Episode 2

Bankster Confrontation

So you might remember that in the last episode of what I call “my life”, I had my water shut off cuz I went over my monthly limit and when I complained to the water department, they told me to take a hike. Literally. To the bank, to get a loan, so I could afford to bribe them to give me extra water. Oh, but my need for Yudollrubpounds, 2038’s violence-backed global currency standard, doesn’t stop there. I’ve managed to rack up more fines for political incorrectness than my meager earnings can handle.

So now here I am getting ready to head out to Banksters “R” Us to try and get a loan at shark-rate interest. You might be wondering about the name of the bank. Well, let’s just say that in 2038, the powers-that-shouldn’t-be are so hubris-filled that they don’t even try to hide anymore. Bankster is a perfectly normal term.

I’m stretching and looking out of one of my two windows in my tiny “eco-friendly” apartment. I’m looking at the freshly chemtrailed sky that our benevolent scientific dictatorship has so carefully and courteously provided for us today. Looks like rain.

I’m out of transportation credits, and private cars are outlawed, so now I’m walking the 3 miles to my nearest Banksters “R” Us branch. Couldn’t find my umbrella, so I’m getting drenched. I know what you’re thinking. Isn’t there something better than umbrellas in the year 2038? Dare to dream, but no. The zombies are veering away from me a bit, one of the perks of having a low social credit score, I guess. Less zombies to deal with.

So now I’m at the giant, towering, gleaming neon monstrosity known as Banksters “R” Us. I walk in with my faithful government mandated drone hovering just above me, as always. I walk up to the humanoid robot receptionist.

“I’m here to see about a loan at shark-rate interest.”

The robot scans my eyes coldly, then gives a paltry excuse with a bemused smile, “Certainly. There will be someone with you shortly. I must say, though, that your odds of actually getting a loan, due to your low social credit score, are very slim.”

Say what you want about robots, at least they’re honest.

After an eternal hour wait, I finally get summoned to a low-level bankster desk. A woman with bee-hive hair gives me some fake cheer across her lobster-like face and invites me to have a seat.

“Oh my, you’re soaking wet.”

"Thanks, I hadn't noticed."

"Why didn't you opt for an online loan application?"

"Because I like to still have face-to-face meetings with people sometimes, just to remind myself that I'm human."

She takes a deep breath, "Hmm, and why didn't you take an autonomous transport to stay clear of the rain?"

"Because I'm out of credits. I probably would've stayed dry today if some psychopathic humans hadn't altered the environment in a vain attempt to control the weather."

My creepy drone explains dryly, "You will be fined 2 credits for insulting the benevolent ruling class."

The loan shark shakes her head disapprovingly, "Well, now, I can see why you have such a low credit score."

The mind-controlled bankster tool puts on her augmented reality glasses, so I assume she's scanning my profile. She shakes her lobster-skull and moans, "Oh, my, I'm afraid you won't qualify."

I know why, but just to make sure, "Why is that?"

Her puffy, rosy cheeks start flapping with laughter, "Well, for starters, your social credit score is one of the lowest I've ever seen. You really need to watch your mouth!"

"I just call it like it is. Without freedom of speech, there can be no freedom."

A chilled collective gasp fills the room. Zombies mouths gape open. Robots heads turn sideways out of confusion.

A zombie at the next desk over yells, "He said the F word!"

My drone fines me 10 credits.

My would-be loan shark says in a low tone, "Perhaps you should seek some professional help. Have you thought of seeing a state psychologist?"

I grit my teeth, "Oh, you mean a mind-controlled, extortion funded tool of the occultocratic ruling class? One that will steal money from me that I don't have just to prescribe some overpriced, mind-destroying drugs? The drugs made by the corporations owned by the dark occult ruling class themselves? Should I go do that? Oh, wait, I don't have the money because you won't give me a loan!"

My drone fines me 20 credits.

Lobster-face turns a shade brighter, "Oh, now, don't blame me for your problems. I just work here. You're a rabble-rousing ragamuffin, if ya ask me. Boy, you do have anger management issues!"

I fume, "And you have reality issues!"

I rise defiantly and storm out of the gaudy bankster monstrosity. I run across the street and get stopped by a six-armed robot cop. One of the unforgiving arms holds me in place as it coldly scans my eyes. "Citizen, you engaged in the prohibited act of jaywalking. This puts you over the monthly violation limit. You will now be put into a 24-hour rehabilitation facility."

I shout, "Oh, you mean you're going to throw me in a cage against my will?! You mean you're violating my natural right to travel? You're violating my right to use my own cognitive abilities and volition to decide when is best to cross a street? You mean you're contributing to hell on earth?"

The robot responds like ice, "Your case will be reviewed by benevolent scientific authorities to see if a state psychologist will be permanently assigned to you after your 24-hour rehabilitation."

So now I'm sitting in a musty dungeon and pondering how the human race got to this point. Why didn't more people have the backbone to say "NO"! Why didn't more people resist? Why didn't they speak out?

Just as I'm about to drift off to some much needed slumber, a creepy, giant worm-like robot slithers its way up to my cage. "Citizen, it is time for your contribution to the green power grid. Please follow me."

My cage opens and I follow the electro-worm. As we walk down a seemingly never-ending corridor, it gets brighter and brighter, almost to the point of being unbearable. Monolithic metal doors slide open, my eyes get scanned, and I follow the metallic worm of slavery into a vast expanse of methodically humming machines.

And what is making those power-producing machines go? Caged humans, just like me, running on treadmills.

My temporary worm slave-driver informs me, "You are assigned to treadmill 322-Z. You will run for 3 hours, taking a break every 20 minutes."

It slithers away and I jump on the treadmill. After about 2 minutes, I feel like I'm gonna keel over. I turn to the guy next to me, "What are you in for?"

The middle aged, panting mustache of a man huffs and puffs, "They told me I was having too much human copulation, and not using my sexbot enough."

I grimace. "That's too bad. I wish mine were so simple."

He looks in my eyes to read my social credit score, "Wow! That's the lowest I've ever seen! You do have problems!"

I fake smile, "Thanks for noticing."

He continues nervously, "Actually, I think I'll request a move away from you at my next break. I shouldn't be talking to you. Who knows how that could effect me, ya know?"

"Yeah, I wouldn't want you to get punished for freedom of association or anything."

He gasps. "You said the F word!" Sirens go off. Mustache-man runs away. I get assigned an extra hour of treadmill-slavery for my "violation".

That's it for this dystopic adventure. See ya next time from Evil Zombieland. Oh yeah, and defend your rights so this doesn't happen to you in the future.

Episode 3

Acronym Wasteland

What's that incessant beeping? I'm waking against my will from an inadequate night's sleep. Ah, yes, my state-mandated drone that follows me 24/7 wakes me at 7am every day, per relativistic and Satanic law of man.

I throw a tomato at the drone hovering near my shoddy bed.

The drone chastises me, "The Global Food Council will be alerted to your abuse of fruit."

I fire back, "That wasn't abuse. It was me throwing a gift to you. Not my fault you can't catch."

The drone gets an LED-light grin across its front, "A friendly reminder, today is a holiday. It's International Praise An Oligarch Day. Which oligarch will you choose to praise?"

I scratch my head as if in deep thought, then reply with relish, "I choose to hate an oligarch. How about that? I think I'll hate the entire Rothschild clan. While I'm at it, I think I'll hate violence, authoritarianism, coercion, fraud, mind-control, and statism! How about that? How about I praise liberty, morality, creation, voluntary interaction, and prosperity?"

The lifeless drone doesn't get it. Oh well, at least saying stuff like that makes me feel good.

"You will be fined 5 credits if you choose to not praise an oligarch today."

I grumble, "Yeah, put it on my tab."

After a cold shower, some barely drinkable coffee, and some kind of GMO-frankenfood that is supposed to be toast, I get some good news.

A holo-call from my girl. I answer. My beautiful partner's hologram shows up in my tiny apartment.

She smiles, "Hey, I'm downstairs. Are you ready?"

"You're a sight for sore eyes. I'll be right down."

So now I'm walking with my girlfriend to a little praise-the-oligarchy get together at our friend's house. Our drones are cruising behind us, of course.

A zombie with a VR headset nearly slams into me. I lament audibly, "Hey, watch it, zombie!"

The unconscious former human replies sharply, "I got permission to wear my VR in the street cuz I woke up early and did extra oligarch praise today!"

Rewarded for groveling. Perfect.

We carry on and soon come to a checkpoint. Robots are scanning and frisking people. My girlfriend puts her hands on hips and scorches me with a look, "Behave yourself, please. It's still early. I want to actually see our friends today."

"You know I can't do that."

A ken-doll-faced humanoid bot along with one that looks like a mini-tank stop us. Ken steals our rights with a smile, "Good morning, citizens. The benevolent oligarchy has provided this extra security checkpoint today as a courtesy and to make sure you have an extra-safe holiday. Where are you going today, citizens?"

I fume, "We're on our way to a social gathering. Unfortunately, we are being violently coerced into praising psychopaths that trample our rights and steal all the planet's resources. I loathe your existence and your evil actions."

Ken holds his fake grin, "Citizen, your unethical and illegal words are not appreciated. Your drone will fine you appropriately. Have a wonderful day."

I look at my girlfriend. Her arms are crossed. I try to play it off, "That wasn't so bad, right?"

She gives me a pouty grin. She understands the truth. It just drives her nuts sometimes that I can't be a bit more selective when choosing my battles.

A couple minutes later and we come across a female humanoid-soldier-bot that's built to look like Wonder Woman or something. She's beating the absolute tar out of a teenager. Choking up and on the verge of tears, the teenager is screaming, "I didn't do anything! Stop! Stop!"

With unrelenting, beaming red eyes, the sleek pile of circuits calmly announces, "Based on all available information in the cloud, it was determined by the Pre-DOCRAP that you were going to conduct an illegal black market transaction within the next hour."

We keep walking. Pre-DOCRAP? What the heck is that? I know that DOCRAP is the Department Of Crime Reduction And Prevention, but I've never heard of Pre-DOCRAP.

I ask my girl, "What's Pre-DOCRAP?"

She rolls her eyes, "It's the new pre-crime division of the DOCRAP. You didn't hear about it?"

“No, my severe allergy to tyranny sometimes keeps me away from the latest news.”

All of you out there might be wondering. Isn't a beating in the street a bit extreme for just an untaxed transaction that hasn't even occurred yet? One of the things that the ruling class hates the most is any type of voluntary commerce outside their control, and especially if they can't extort money out of it.

So now we're at our friend's house. The door covered in peeling paint opens and we're greeted by 2 cheesy grins and 2 hovering drones.

“Hey you two, glad you could make it!”

I decide to lie, “We wouldn't miss this for the world!”

We're shown into a tiny living room where two other state-loving zombies are lazily chatting about fluff and other useless stuff. A mini-hologram is front and center near one of the walls. It's the annual Oligarch Day parade. I might vomit on the zombies.

Our male zombie friend says, “So glad you could make it! Help yourselves to snacks. We have reconstituted insect pulp crackers and synthetic cheese product.”

I gulp and grimace, “Thanks. You shouldn't have.”

After about an hour of agonizing small talk about sports, the latest machinations of the violent ruling class, and the newest virtual reality distractions, the female zombie-friend says, “We're praising Philip Rothschild. Which oligarch are you praising today?”

Despite the blazing look of no painted ever so elegantly across my lovely girl's face, I calmly inform the group that, “I'm not praising a psychopath parasite that rules over the rest of us via mind-control, fraud, and violent coercion. Instead, I'm praising peace, love, morality, creation, and liberty.”

My drone dryly announces, “You will be fined 2 credits for the use of the word liberty and 10 credits for insulting the oligarchy.”

A stunned zombie guest says defensively, “Oh, how can you say that? Where would we be without the oligarchy? Without them, we wouldn't have these drones around to keep us safe. We wouldn't have the Universal Basic Income, and, well, lots of things.”

One of our zombie hosts chimes in with an uncomfortable grin, “Now, you see why you have such a low social credit score? You can't go around saying things like that and expect to get anywhere in this world. You should consider yourself lucky that I even invited you here, ya know. Just being around

someone with a credit score as low as yours could do serious damage to my future."

My girlfriend tries to take that as a cue and change the subject, "So, speaking of your future, you two have been trying to get approval to have a child. How's that going?"

Mixed looks from both of our hosts as the reply comes, "Well, it's a long process, ya know. We're happy to report that we were approved by the SCAB."

I interrupt, "Refresh me on what the SCAB is?"

"The Seeking Child Advisory Board."

I facepalm, "Please continue."

"But after getting approved by the SCAB, we had to apply to IMPALE."

I'm a glutton for punishment, so I ask, "And what is IMPALE?"

A stunned look accompanies the answer, "Intelligent Mating Parenting And Licensing Executive. What planet are you from?"

I double facepalm, "Of course, how silly of me. Go on."

"So we've been having interviews with lots of doctors, psychologists, and social engineers. It's really fascinating to see how much really goes into the proper planning of child bearing."

I beg to differ, "Actually, all of that authoritarian, technocratic, cybernetic, social-engineering load of horse mularky isn't necessary to have a child. It really just takes two consenting individuals to..."

My girlfriend jumps in to stop me, "What he means is, having children used to be simpler in the past."

I continue, "We used to have freedom in the past, too."

My drone informs us, "You will be fined 2 credits for use of the word freedom."

Stunned faces ooze disapproval. One of the zombie guests squawks, "That F word you speak is dangerous!"

I push back, "And what makes you think that?"

"Because we were taught that in school!"

Before I can dig deeper into the injured minds of these zombies, my drone interrupts again, "This social gathering has just been deemed to be of a subversive nature by the DOCRAP. Please disperse and return to your dwellings."

Our female zombie host bursts into tears. Her partner yells at me, "Now see what you've done! You've ruined our party, and worst of all, now we'll never get approved to have a child!"

My girl and I take deep breaths and slip out of the place quite uncomfortably.

I look at my girl sheepishly, "I thought that went well."

She can't help but love my devotion to truth and liberty. She smiles and says, "Yeah, as good as I could have hoped, considering how well I know you."

Episode 4

Obedience Counselor

I'm stumbling out to my kitchen to try and scrounge up some breakfast. I didn't sleep well last night. I never do the night before bantering with an obedience counselor. That's right, I said obedience counselor. Here in Evil Zombieland in 2038, everyone has to see what they call an obedience counselor once a month.

In reality, an obedience counselor is a mind-controlled psychopath that is supported by a form of extortion called taxation. The so-called counselor talks to people all day and tries to guilt trip and coerce them into being more obedient to the immoral scientific dictatorship's diktats.

Needless to say, since I'm a rare breed called a conscious anarchist, and not an unconscious zombie, there are quite a few fireworks when I bump heads with my state-appointed counselor stooge.

I see a little milk left and reach out to grab the tiny container. A robotic arm in the fridge beats me to it and puts the little bottle in a death grip. My fridge announces, "You have exceeded your milk ration for the next 24 hours. Perhaps drink some water instead."

Damn. My diet foiled by green totalitarians yet again. Tired and grumpy, I fire back, "By water, you mean that chemical soup that dribbles out of my faucet occasionally? That poisonous excuse for water that is scientifically designed to neutralize people's cognition and volition?"

My omnipresent state-mandated drone announces, "Your meeting with your obedience counselor is in one hour. You must leave in 2 minutes in order to not be late."

"I don't care if I'm late."

"Tardiness will result in a fine of 2 credits."

I scour my kitchen for something even halfway desirable to eat, give up, devour some reconstituted GMO veggie-pulp crackers, and zip out the door.

So now I'm huffing and puffing as I run to my obedience counselor's office, which is inconveniently located in Freedom Tower 123, a name dripping with so much dark irony that George Orwell would be shocked. Why inconveniently located? It's one of the farthest so-called counselors from my place and it was appointed to me by some nebulous bureaucrat based on some formula they use to give every citizen optimal exercise. Optimal in the sense that they're not the ones who have to do it.

As I pass by an Ama-Wal-Cost Mega Warehouse, my attention is grabbed by screams. I soon see that a bear is running loose and people are scampering in

all directions with arms flailing about. I take a detour to save my skin. Lots of animals running wild in Evil Zombieland's cities. It's been like that for decades, ever since the rewilding projects were started. And it's forbidden to defend yourself with a weapon, so people just run, scream, and cry. Usually nobody is hurt, but sometimes people get mauled. Generally it's some zombie who's so zoned out on a techie device that they don't notice and don't run.

On the verge of collapse as I approach the gaudy extortion-funded building, a little black box scans my eyes at the front door and I make my way to Mr. Whip's office. That's right. My obedience counselor is named Mr. Whip! No shortage of dark humor here in Evil Zombieland.

Mr. Whip greets me with his usual fake sap and cheese grin, "Hey, good to see you. Wow, why do you look so tired?"

I manage to huff out, "Because I'm out of transport credits. I had to run."

"Well, if you were more obedient and had a higher social credit score, then you'd have more travel credits than you'd know what to do with!"

I fight off the urge to sucker punch him in his round-faced bald head, "Yeah, and maybe if a bunch of brainwashed, immoral control freaks didn't have humanity and free will in a death grip, then I'd have bountiful prosperity instead of this austere hell."

Undeterred, he gives a look of pseudo-sympathy and says, "Oh, there you go again, externalizing your problems. Remember, you're in control of your life. If you're unhappy, you have to look at yourself first."

That's what these parasites posing as beneficent angels do. They blame the victim and twist the truth and logic upside down in a shameful display of mock care.

My face flushes, "I only have so much control over what I experience in my life. What the billions of other people do on this planet does affect me! What you're doing right now affects me! What those damned drones do affects me!"

He holds up a pudgy hand of conciliation, "Ok, ok, let's not get testy. One more outburst like that and we'll have to medicate you. Now, let's get into what's been happening the past month with you."

He scans over my file quickly and while doing so unleashes a series of intolerable, "Uh huhs, hmmmms, ahhhhs, and ohhhhs."

"I see you've been racking up quite a few fines lately. In particular, you've been using the 'F' word an astounding number of times."

I retort, "Oh, you mean the word freedom. One of the most important words in the history of words that's been banned by the psychopathic oligarchy? The word which threatens the very essence of the oligarchy's control over the

human race? A powerful word that inspires people to fight off dark oppressors?"

The sniveling little parasite taps his fingers on his pointy little chin, "Very interesting. And who are these so-called dark oppressors?"

A voluminous grin envelops my face, "You are one of them."

He scoffs and giggles, "And how is that?"

"That's easy. Because your actions are wrong. Your actions are immoral."

His face flattens out with sincerity, "Moving on. You haven't done nearly enough hours on your virtual reality device. Even worse is that you haven't been to your sexual surrogate at all! Explain yourself!"

"I like to spend my time in actual reality, not the virtual one. Ya know, I read books, take walks, think, create art, things like that. Reality interests me, not the psychologically weaponized techno-distraction created and mandated by technocrats called virtual reality."

He interrupts, "An entertained mind eases the grind. You know your slogans, don't you?"

Ignoring his remark, I smirk and continue, "As for the surrogates, my girlfriend fulfills all of my sexual needs. I don't need those lifeless humanoid sexbots that get rolled off the assembly line."

His tiny lips pucker, "You do know what will happen if you don't comply, don't you?"

"I imagine some robots will throw me in a cage and force me to do some type of ludicrous labor that some evil technocrat deems necessary."

With unwavering beady eyes, he spews, "As usual, you're one of my most difficult clients and we're nearly out of time. However, I must point out your most serious offense. You talked with someone in the street about the word 'anarchy'. Certainly, you must know what an intolerable crime this is! In your own best interest, you will be given medication to help you get over your mental ailment. The good news is, you'll be better in no time!"

With a tone of panache, "Oh, you mean I was speaking truth to someone in the street, telling them the real meaning of the word anarchy, which is 'without rulers'. You mean you're going to violate my freedom of speech? You mean you're going to force me to take a harmful chemical cocktail that was designed by authoritarian pseudo-scientists for the purpose of destroying the mind and body of free humans?"

Shaking his bald head and wagging a pudgy finger he snivels, "See, there you go again with your negative language. I'm afraid we're out of time. I'll make sure your drone delivers your medication to you. See you next month!"

So now I'm walking into my girlfriend's tiny so-called eco-friendly apartment. She gives me a smile that makes me melt, "Hey, how was your day?"

With a bemused smile I answer, "The usual."

Episode 5

Free Market

"I've got quite the surprise for you," my girlfriend says with a sly grin.

My mind quickly analyzes. This could be really awesome, or super-horrific. My girl is hard to read sometimes. I take a deep breath, "Oh boy, I love surprises."

She puts an iron grip on my shoulder, "We're going to the black market!"

Cue me getting dizzy. Dizzy with pleasure, that is. "What? How did you manage that? Is this one of your cruel and unusual practical jokes?"

I can tell just from her smile that she's serious and possibly more excited than I am.

A little background.

So here in Evil Zombieland, in 2038, there are lots of illegal things that you fine folks from ten or twenty years back might take for granted. For example, getting anything fixed is forbidden. I'll pause for that to soak into your skull.....

So imagine, when anything breaks and goes haywire, ya gotta buy a new one. You might be wondering why that psychopathic group of control freaks calling themselves government would implement such a ridiculous law. And I answer with a question. When does government ever do anything that makes sense?

Ok, so short story long, we're going to the black market, which is basically like hitting a zillion to one lotto ticket. Why?

Because you either pay a very dear price, or you know someone. Ya see, to have a market of any size and to keep it quiet is no small task. First of all, you need a sizable venue, which means that a pretty wealthy person has to host it. That's not the pricey part, though.

Everyone that goes has to disable their government mandated drone that follows them around 24/7.

Cue price gouging from some tech-savvy bloke who's out to make a quick bucket of bucks.

Ok, way too much backstory. So how did my girl pull this off?

"If I told you, it would make your head spin," she says.

"That's not comforting."

"A friend of a friend, blah, blah. Our ride is gonna be here soon, so let's step out."

So now we're waiting on a busy corner under a freshly chemtrailed sky. Our drones are still with us. I want to ask when they're going to take a nosedive, but I figure it's better to keep my mouth shut. Don't want that flying circuit board to get suspicious or anything.

With a fixed gaze in the distance, my girl happily announces, "Oh, here it comes! That's our ride!"

"Where? What?"

"That limo."

I bite my tongue. No questions. My curious face speaks volumes. She gives me a sideways glance, "I told you not to ask."

We both bust up laughing.

So now we're crammed in an autonomous limo with other black marketeers. I know, I know, I should say free market, cuz that's actually what it is. The Agora would be another way to say it. Tax free and, if you prefer, anonymous. You have to admit, though, that black market has a certain ring to it.

We're zipping around curves through a thick tree-lined landscape. "I haven't been this far outside the city in forever! You mean people actually still live out here?" Which brings me to an irresistible question. Who the heck is hosting this? After all, it is a very risky endeavor. If you get caught hosting one of these shindigs, you could spend the rest of your life in a cage.

We pull up to a tall black gate at the bottom of a luscious green hill. The limo tells us that this is the end of the line. An awkward looking, rail thin, buck-toothed character approaches us. This must be the price gouging techie. All that money and he can't get his teeth fixed? Again, I'll bite my tongue.

He leads us to a handsome looking 3-story house. All the while, he's tapping furiously on a tablet. Suddenly, all our drones slowly and with perfect precision fly in unison and land softly on, well, a giant pile of drones.

An eccentric looking young dude greets us at the stone archway front entrance. With cheer in his voice, "Welcome! You guys are the last group. Come on in! The party's just getting started!"

Without thinking I ask, "This is your place?"

"Yep."

"How can you afford it?"

He gives a mischievous grin, "I work for the government."

I freeze and my eyeballs feel like they're gonna pop out.

"Just kidding."

Everyone chuckles at my expense.

High double doors part and we glide into a huge room where a palpable buzz hits us. It reminds me of one of those Turkish bazaars they used to have in the old days. We get lost in the mix. Our host disappears.

A jolly-looking, squat, puffy-eyed old man steps into my face, "Hey, haven't seen you two here before."

"Nope. We're new."

"What brings you here?"

"A desire for extortion-free commerce. You?"

The old man gives a sly grin, "Oh, I come to all these things. I raise support for the cause."

"The cause?"

He looks me dead in the eye, "Yep. This damn government is out of control."

Amused, I ask, "And what do you plan to do about it?"

He looks me up and down, "We're gonna overthrow the bastards."

This guy is a crude mix of misguided, scary, and entertaining. "And what happens after they're valiantly overthrown? A new clique of psychopaths takes the reigns of fallacious authority? Then we'll have new masters robbing us?"

His face freezes. I can tell this angle had never occurred to him before. His heart was in the right place, but his mind was still under the false belief in external human authority.

A young lady wearing rainbow leather joins us, "This old man telling you about 'the cause'? I've come to rescue you."

We chuckle and she leads us away. The old man stammers off to contemplate his mind being blown.

Rainbow asks, "You two been to the services area yet?"

"Nope. We just got here."

“Services, that’s where it’s at!” she shouts.

We follow her through a human maze of wheeling and dealing. We notice some extravagant art on the wall. My girl exclaims, “Wow! Is that non-digital art?”

Rainbow beams, “Yep. So much better than digital, right?”

We turn a corner and suddenly are in a huge garden area. “What are you two looking for?”

“Just kind of looking around. We don’t have much money.”

She looks at me like I’m from the planet Schitzoid. “You have skills, right?”

“More than I know what to do with.”

My girl elbows me and rolls her eyes.

Rainbow continues, “Well, skills are all the currency you need here! Of course, you can always use encrypted Yudollrubpounds, or dark web cryptos, but skills are all you really need. See that guy over there?”

“The one with the thinnest eyebrows I’ve ever seen?”

“Yep. All he does is fix smart fridges.”

“By fix you mean.”

“Double meaning. He can literally fix it if it’s not working, but most people do the other kind of fix. Meaning, no more big brother watching what you’re eating. A big step towards food freedom.”

My girl and I both shiver with bliss. “What about the personal drone? Doesn’t it see what happens and report it to the psychopathic technocrat controllers?”

Rainbow’s face twists with pleasure, “No, silly. That’s part of the package. He gives the drone some blind spots, let’s say. Speaking of food, there’s the organic guy.”

“Organic guy?” my girl and I say in unison.

“Yeah, he delivers organic produce.”

“When you say organic, you mean real produce. Non-GMO, chemical-free, won’t give me cancer food?”

“Yep.”

“But how does he?”

She cuts me off, "I have no idea. And it's not cheap, but damn is it worth it!"

"So basically, anything that's been banned by the mafia with fancy titles, can be found here?"

"Anything that people want. If there's a market for it, it will be produced. People always find a way."

Her face brightens up even more, "Oh, and then there's the freedom of speech guy. Or, one of them, rather. You know how you get fined by your stupid drone if you say words like 'freedom' or 'liberty'? Well, that guy makes drones not hear those words."

My heart jumps, "Wow! I need that guy! That's what I need!"

My mind starts racing. This whole entire world exists, and I was clueless about it. Well, I knew the free market existed, but I didn't know the grand extent until I experienced it myself.

Rainbow continues, "So my suggestion to you is, make contacts while you're here. Networking is key. If you get enough contacts, then you don't even really need to come to these things anymore. I do, because they're fun, and newbies always show up, but most business happens on a daily basis. I gotta run. Have fun!"

So now we've been here for a couple hours, which felt like five minutes. We've made lots of contacts and I have a new hope for the future.

And then a giant blaring siren ends my newfound excitement with a crushing thud.

"What's that?" my girl inquires nervously.

A lanky dude next to us yells, "We gotta get out now! The police are on the way. We're getting busted!"

I lament with ferocity, "Damn violent authoritarian parasite thugs! Ahhhhhhhhh! Just my luck, dammit!"

Chaos ensues. Hundreds of people scatter. My girl and I flee on foot.

An hour later and we're still hiking down the highway hoping not to be seen. Then a state thug cuts us off in his extortion-mobile.

The chubby badge-wielding weasel points his gun at us, "What are you two doing out here?"

"Trying to be free."

"What my boyfriend means is that we're lost."

The thug in blue rolls his eyes, "You're outside city limits. Do you have a pass?"

"You mean a document that we're violently forced to pay an exorbitant fee to obtain? A giant obstruction to liberty? A slap in the face to the human race's natural right to travel?"

Mind-controlled mercenary starts frothing at the mouth and slams me to the turf, "I'll take that as a no. You're both going to jail."

I manage to mutter, despite my face being pushed into the turf, "You mean a cage."

Then the cop drops and nearly crushes my skull with his fall.

I glance at my girl. Her face is in shock. A man in black is leaning next to a limo, "Keep staring and I might do a trick."

I brush myself off. "What?"

"Just get in the car."

We rush into the limo. "What just happened?"

"I put that guy to sleep so you don't get thrown in a cage. You're welcome."

"How? Is he gonna be ok?"

"Dart gun. Sleepy sleepy time. He'll be fine. Might have a headache tomorrow."

"Why did you help us?"

"Because I'm human and I have a conscience."

My heart leaps for joy. Wow, even as bad as things are in Evil Zombieland, there's still hope. There's still resistance. There are people, although few and far between, who have knowledge of what liberty is, and the care and will to act on it.

Episode 6

A Casual Family Conversation

I'm waiting with my girlfriend on the corner just outside my apartment building, which I call "Tower Zillion". Not too much of an exaggeration, considering the endless towers most of the human race is crammed into in 2038. I'm begrudgingly accompanying my girlfriend to a fancy backslapping pow-wow her parents are having to celebrate her psychopath father's military promotion.

I look up at midday sky. There's a thick, mushy blanket of chemtrails very high up, which means it's what passes for sunny in 2038.

My unwanted government appointed drone shadow nitpicks, "UV radiation is high today. You should be wearing sunscreen."

My eyes throw darts as I reply, "No, thanks. I'll take all the vitamin D I can get through that disgusting chemical blanket that the scientific dictatorship has so malevolently bequeathed upon us."

"You will be fined one credit for insulting science."

I ask my girl why she looks nervous.

"Just please don't insult my father too much. Please?"

"Ok, not too much. Just enough to get us kicked out again."

She sighs and giggles, "You're too much."

"It's not that I don't like your dad, it's just, ya know, he's an order-following member of a violent and murderous cult. Other than that, he's an ok dude."

She cringes, but doesn't say anything, cuz she knows it's the truth.

A spiffy-looking flying car suddenly descends on us. Most people don't have personal transport, and certainly not flying cars, but membership in Satan's dark army of death and plunder has its short-term, superficial privileges, so her dad sent his car to get us.

Within about 30 seconds, I feel a huge twist and drop of my stomach, and all hell breaks loose. Ok, well, not all hell, but the past two synthetic, GMO meals I ingested to attempt physical survival. They came out a lot faster than I put them in, that's for sure.

"Ahhhh! You're so gross!" my girl wails and laments as she turns away from the flight induced semi-digested chunks of horror.

The autonomous vehicle announces, "Destination reached. Please exit the vehicle at your convenience."

You've never seen anyone get out of a car faster than my girlfriend at that moment.

I kiss the ground. I imagine that my girlfriend ponders ditching me. I brush myself off and we walk up the charmed steps of the violence-backed opulence that is my girlfriend's family's house.

The heavy wooden door creaks open and we're greeted by a study in contrast. El Generalisimo has sternness etched into his boulder-esque face. If this is him when he's celebrating, I'd hate to see him on a bad day. Then there's the happy contrast that is Generalisimo's wife. The warm glow from her face just rolls off and massages your nerves. How these two live together is a miraculous wonder all to itself.

"Congratulations, Dad!"

I try my best fake smile and keep silent.

General Gruff responds, "I appreciate your attempt at a bold faced lie, but it's not necessary."

Miss Day-glow melts the ice, "Oh, don't mind Mr. Grump-a-lump-agous, you know how he is. Come in, the party's just getting started!"

We walk into the vaulted ceiling palace that was built by plunder. Fancy furniture, fancy food, fake people, antiques, fountains, and overpriced gadgets galore. Too bad it cost him his eternal soul.

"So dad, tell us more about your big promotion!" my girl asks with mock excitement. She's a damn good actress.

Stone-face replies with the charm of a mildly pissed off German Shepherd, "I will become a general and will be in charge of the autonomous drone fleet."

With smug relish, I spout, "If someone is in charge of the drones, then they can't be autonomous, right? Seems like a contradiction to me."

Generalisimo growls and has what appears to be molten lava coming out of his ears.

His brave spouse soothes us, "Well, what have you two been up to? It's been so long since we've had a chance to talk!"

I blurt happily, "We went to The Agora a couple weeks ago!"

As my girlfriend is busy inventing a new style of cringe, her father groans, "You did what? You mean the black market? I won't tolerate such talk in my

house!" He motions with his eyes to the countless drones hovering among us. "I can lose my job over stuff like that!"

Miss Sunshine laughs, "Oh, dear, calm down, you're not losing your job. Relax. This is a happy occasion."

I won't back down, though. Provoking this ignorant order-follower is too fun and far too necessary to stop. "Sir, I'm curious to know, what exactly does the autonomous drone fleet do?"

He appears surprised at my mock interest. I know damn well what those drones do. I just want to hear him put spin on it so I can destroy the wall of lies enveloping his mind.

"Well, it's pretty complicated. Essentially, the main objective is to neutralize enemy combatants."

"What are the characteristics of an enemy combatant, sir?"

As he sputters to look for a clear cut definition, which of course doesn't exist because it's based on moral relativism, I continue, "I heard that another wedding got blown up in East Asia last week. Does that qualify?"

He slams his fist on the nearby oak table, "We're not at war with East Asia, dammit! Where'd you hear that?"

"Have we ever been at war with East Asia?"

Total befuddlement. He doesn't read, so the 1984 reference went sky-high over his noggin. "What are you getting at?"

"The truth. I'm getting at the truth. One of the autonomous drone fleet's objectives is to murder people. Not only that, but they're used in totalitarian surveillance, as well. And it's all financed by extortion! Actually, every Yudollrubpound you've ever received from the military was financed by extortion, more euphemistically known as taxation!"

He growls, "You disgust me."

"Likewise."

"You will be fined ten credits for insulting the autonomous drone fleet," my drone informs us dryly.

Our friendly mediator comes to the rescue, "Oh, look who's here! It's your friend from the defense industry. Let's go say high and have some drinks."

"You mean the murder and plunder industry? I'd love to say hi, and a whole lot more to them!"

My girlfriend yanks my arm and pierces me with her eyes. "I mean, I'd love some drinks!"

Her parents walk off and as we follow from behind I whisper, "You know I have a severe allergy to tyranny. I can't help it. Besides, at this rate, we'll get to go home early."

A super-puffy version of the monopoly man character greets us with glee. We go through the formalities.

I ask, "What company are you with?"

He answers proudly, "Lockheed-Boeing-Dyncorp. Finest technology in the world, and don't you forget it!"

I wonder how much hot air would come out if I gave him a good poke in the belly. I manage to resist the urge.

He continues to my girl, "And young lady, you should be so proud of your father! Without him, guys like me wouldn't do so good a business, you know!"

My heart races and I jump in, "You mean without order-following mercenaries who don't know the difference between right and wrong, merchants of death like yourself would have to find respectable ways to make a living?"

Undeterred, he retorts, "Oh, my dear boy, you must be one of those, um, what do they call them....conspiracy theorist types, I believe, yes?"

I twist my head and shoot laser beams with my eyes, "Throw all the meaningless, weaponized labels on me all you want, it doesn't change the truth."

Stone face slams a whiskey and apologizes to his mass murder peddler. His undaunted wife holds a fake smile and waves to some guests across the room. My girlfriend slams two whiskeys. I pat myself on the back.

Five minutes later, we're on our way home. "I thought that went well."

My girl sobs and asks, "In what possible way did that go well?"

"We got out of there in record time! There's still some sun left. And the chemtrails have dissipated a bit. Cheer up!"

"My father is going to kill you."

"Nah, he wouldn't do that. He might order someone else to do it for him, though."

Episode 7

The Protest Zone

So I've got a big day ahead, real big. It's the one day out of the year where people are allowed to "protest" in public. Here in 2038, it's called "International Democracy Day". But I call it something else, a bit closer to reality. I call it "International Beg Your So-called Masters For Less Slavery Day".

Basically it's a day where people go out to designated areas and complain about things that they want the parasites calling themselves government to change. Don't get me wrong, their hearts are in the right places, but begging for less slavery isn't gonna cut it. What people don't realize is that they need to take actions every day to cause change to happen. But most people don't have the courage to do that.

So am I gonna go complain? Nope. What I do, well,.....you'll see.

So now I'm in what today they call "Protest Center 4." Any other day it's just a city park, but today it's filled with misguided, well-meaning people begging for less slavery.

Any and every type of thing you can imagine gets protested out here. I think the most bizarre I've ever seen was last year. The violent order-followers with badges were protesting being filmed too much by people without badges.

I see a guy with a shirt on that says, "Make Taxes Fair." Perfect target for education on reality.

"Excuse me, I couldn't help but notice your shirt."

"Yeah, taxes are way too high. If they don't lower taxes, the economy will suffer."

I fight off the urge to laugh. "Yes, I'm in favor of the zero tax."

"Zero tax? Oh, I dunno about that. We need some taxes."

"Do you think that people pay taxes voluntarily?"

Awkward pause, pursed lips, head scratching, then finally, "Well, um, no, probably not. Most people don't pay it because they want to, but because they have to."

"Because they're afraid of what might happen if they don't pay?"

"Yeah, that's probably a common reason."

"So people are forced to give up their property, involuntarily. That sounds like theft to me."

He starts squirming. "Oh, well, I'm not sure I'd call it theft."

"Then what would you call forced appropriation of property?"

"Well, I, um, I'm not sure what that would be called, really."

"That's because taxation IS theft. So now I ask, what form of theft is fair?"

"Theft isn't fair, of course. Theft is wrong."

"Exactly. Which is why we cannot make taxes fair."

"Man, you just blew my mind!"

"Good, that's what I'm here for."

I pat myself on the back and drift around looking for someone else to stun into reality. I spot a lady with a hologram banner that says "Stop The NSA."

Yes, the NSA still exists in 2038. Did you really think it would go anywhere?

"Nice sign, I agree."

"Yeah, it's gone too far. Big brother is here!"

I take notice of a smart-gizmo embedded under her forearm. "I see you've got a smart-gizmo implant."

"Yeah, it's really convenient."

"And I assume that you willingly had that put in your body."

"Yeah, it really saves time, and it's so much easier than carrying my gizmo around."

"May I ask how you expect to get any privacy if you willingly implant devices in your body that you know are used to gather all your data?"

"Well, just because I use technology, doesn't mean the government has to use it to spy on me."

"That's true. However, the point is that you chose to implant a spy device in your arm, and now you're begging them to stop spying on you. Do you not see the contradiction?"

"Hey, are you trying to call me stupid?"

I sigh and say, "Not at all. Have a nice day." I walk away.

There, I planted a seed. I'm not sure she'll ever understand it, but I did my due diligence.

I see an older guy who has a sophisticated look about him. He's protesting the big banks.

"Excuse me, sir. I agree that the banks are out of control."

"Damn right they are!"

"Perhaps you can remember about 15 or 20 years ago, there was something called cryptocurrencies. Did you ever use them?"

"Well, um, no, I never got into that kind of stuff."

"May I ask why not?"

"I was too busy to learn all that stuff."

"You were too busy to learn how to get free from the very thing you're protesting today?"

"Hey, watch your attitude. It's not my fault."

"Actually, anyone who didn't even give cryptos a shot and allowed the psychopath gang called government to outlaw them shares part of the blame."

He huffs gruffly, "Leave me alone. You want me to call the police?"

I laugh at his absurd, fear-based response and take a hike. Within a minute, I spot a guy protesting police brutality.

I make my approach, "Hey man, right on. I agree, the police are way too violent."

He smiles, "Yeah, thanks man."

"You know what I call police? I call them what they really are. I call them violent rights-violators funded by extortion."

I get the blank stare for a moment.

I continue, "Which means that all police are bad."

His face comes to shocked life, "Well, no, not all police are bad. There are some good cops out there."

I shake my head, "No, good cops cannot exist because they are funded by extortion."

He scratches his head, "I thought taxes paid their salaries."

I grin, "Exactly. Taxation is theft."

He has a blend of grimness and confusion on his long face.

I give a hopeful look, "So are you going to protest again tomorrow?"

He blushes, "Oh, no, I can't do that. Today's the only day the government lets us. You know that."

"What would happen if you did?"

"Well, I guess the police would stop me somehow."

"Would those be the good police, or the bad police?"

Now he looks like his head might explode. I wish him well as I see my next target out of the corner of my eye.

It's a lobster-faced lady slurping down a Coke and protesting the government health system, which I prefer to call the death management system run by authoritarians.

I move in, "Yeah, that's the most important cause right there. If ya can't be healthy, then ya can't be free."

She nods haughtily, "Thank you. Yeah, the health system needs some serious repair. I've got diabetes and can barely afford to see a doctor!"

I decide to give her the obvious question as I fight through the preposterousness of this zombie's world. "I'm sorry to hear of your personal circumstances. Have you ever considered not drinking chemically synthesized beverages? They're designed to make you sick. If you make some personal changes to your lifestyle, then perhaps you wouldn't have diabetes."

She gets offended, "Are you saying it's my fault that I'm sick?!"

"What I'm saying is that Coke might as well be called bottled health hazard or diabetes in a cup. You're responsible for your health. And having a health system run by government parasites and Big Pharma corporations isn't going to help you, either."

A guy passing by with an SJW shirt on mutters, "Hey, are you harassing this woman?"

I facepalm. "I'm telling her the truth. Let me guess, you're not protesting on behalf of freedom of speech."

He starts flailing his arms around and yelling, "Police, help! This person is offensive. I demand justice!"

And that's my cue to scat. Me getting thrown in a cage won't accomplish anything. I zig and zag my way to safety.

When I get to my so-called eco-friendly jail cell, euphemistically called an apartment, my girl is waiting, curled up and reading an e-book. (Paper books are an expensive luxury these days)

She looks surprised, "Hey, you're home early."

"Why so surprised?"

"You didn't get thrown in a cage?"

"Nope. I valiantly ran away before the police could get there."

Episode 8

Dinner Out

So I'm walking down one of the main thoroughfares of my smart prison, err, I mean city. It's nighttime and the illumination level beamed down by the so-called intelli-lights falls somewhere between dim and lusterless.

"Not far now," my girlfriend says with a hint of cynicism.

"Hey, I'm supposed to be the cynical one," I say.

She smirks, "I'm just as cynical as you. It's just that you say it out loud more."

"True."

We've already walked 20 blocks and have another 20 or so to go. Why are we walking so far, you might be wondering? Because we're out of travel credits until next month. Ahhh, the joys of Agenda 21 technocratic austerity!

It's a special night, which has me in a cautiously joyful mood. We're going out to dinner! And I can't tell you how rare of a treat that is in the year 2038. Hence my cautious joy!

30 minutes later, and eureka! We've reached our destination! A charming little place called "Malentina's". I know, I know, whoever dreamed up that horrific name should feel deeply shameful. Anyway, we've heard great things about the food, and that's why we're here, not cuz of some snazzy name.

There are tons of people and humanoids roaming around, chatting endlessly about nothing and playing with unlimited gadgets and gizmos. And that's just on the outside of the place.

On the inside, it's more of the same. We approach an annoyed looking hostess, "Table for two, please".

Her disinterested reply, "The wait is between 2 and 3 hours."

This doesn't shock me. Actually, it's a bit less than I expected. You see, most restaurants here in Evil Zombieland in 2038 typically have about a 3 hour wait to get a table. Why? Because the gang with fancy titles called government highly restricts food vending licenses, so there aren't too many restaurants.

Of course, there are super high priced ones where you can get a table without waiting, but those are generally only affordable to those in the mid to upper echelons of the mind-controlled, order-following class of henchmen and pawns. The managerial class, you might say.

We put our name on the never-ending list. "What now?" my girl asks.

I give a cheshire grin, "I've got an idea."

"I don't like when you get that look on your face," she says playfully.

"What look? Let's walk down to Black Tie and have a cocktail."

She waivers, "A drink there costs more than a meal here."

"It'll be worth it. Come on. It's just down the street."

So now we're approaching Black Tie. Wow, it actually has real stone and wood. Wood isn't allowed to be used in construction anymore, and stone is highly restricted by the malevolent Agenda 21 enforcers.

We walk in and the décor doesn't disappoint. Sparkling chandeliers, mahogany, crystal, the works. After absorbing some snooty looks from patrons and staff alike, we approach the middle-aged man at the host station.

With a twisted brow he asks, "Are you lost?"

With an amused, yet deadpan face, I say, "We'd just like to have a drink at the bar. Thanks for the salt!" We strut past. He turns red.

No shortage of fake people sporting outrageously expensive smart-clothes at the bar. After ordering 2 smart whiskeys from a boy-band-looking humanoid bartender, we settle in and I take mental notes of the characters around us.

"Plotting your master plan?" my girl asks with amusement.

"You know me all too well."

The smart whiskeys arrive. I suggest we mingle. "That lobster-faced lady. Guarantee she's a bureaucrat. Let's have a chat, shall we?"

I approach her as she's in mid-fake-laugh, "Hi, do I know you from somewhere? I saw you on one of the fake news channels, didn't I?"

She turns a brighter shade of red, "Oh, I'm afraid not. I work for the population council."

Perfect. I move in for more, "Oh, the population council? You mean that group of extortion funded authoritarians who try to play god and decide who can produce offspring and in what quantity? You must have one hell of a Satanic ego!"

Her eyes bulge, "Excuse me? And who are you?"

"Me? Oh, I'm the guy that just told you the truth. Gotta run, see ya!"

I slam my whiskey and dart to a different part of the cocktail area, trying to avoid darth lobster's optic death beams.

While looking around for the next "victim" of an educational, truth telling rant, I notice a huge wooden bookshelf. I've never seen so many paper books in all my life! I wonder how many violence-backed Yudollrubpounds that cost?

I've got one spotted. Gruff looking older guy with a crew cut. More than likely in the employ of the death cult known as the military.

As we approach, I tell my girlfriend, "Follow my lead."

Then when we're next to the guy, I say super loud to my girl, "Hey! Isn't that terrible! I heard the same thing! How dare they even think of reducing the military budget!"

His eyes lock with mine. Bingo.

Gruff mercenary greets us, "Excuse me, I couldn't help but overhear you. Where did you hear that?"

"I honestly can't say. May I ask why it concerns you, sir?"

He cocks his head up, "I work with the autonomous drone fleet resources department."

I give a sideways glance, "Oh, you mean that drone fleet that monitors rural lands and keeps people away from natural resources, thus creating a monopoly for those in the dark occult ruling class? The same drone fleet that murders people if they dare step foot on a certain hill or pick a certain flower? That evil tool of the cybernetic control system that helps keep humanity enslaved?"

"Why you little!" he grumbles. He starts cocking his head around. I figure he's looking for a member of the staff to have us thrown out.

We decide not to give him the pleasure. "Ok, that's enough fun for right now," my bemused girl says.

I agree and we happily make our way back to Malentina's.

2 hours later and we're sharing a tiny synthetic table and looking over the menu at Malentina's.

"I hear the reconstituted poop burgers here are phenomenal," I say with a straight face.

My girl gags. Some people just still can't adjust to the idea of eating what used to be poop, despite all the assurances from armies of scientists who insist it's safe.

I've eaten one before, I'll be honest. It was, well, edible. I'm sure with enough chemical wonder sauce, it would actually taste good. It might be cancerous from tons of chemicals, but it'll taste good.

My girl says excitedly, "Oh, they've got insect cakes here! I've never tried those!"

Insect cakes. Imagine crab cakes, but with insects instead. Jealous?

A humanoid waitress with pink hair and covered in plaid comes over and gives a tin can giggly greeting. She asks if we have questions.

"Yeah, why does the Global Food Council exist? On that note, why does government exist?"

"The Global Food Council exists to..."

I cut her off, "It was just a joke. I'm not interested in your programmed and predictable answer. Anyway, yeah, I have questions about the food. I'm curious about Veggie Compost Blend number 3. It says it's a souffle-like dish, radiated to perfection, with an Aspernola Glaze. What's that glaze, exactly?"

She announces with robotic cheer, "It's a new experimental flavor enhancer, a mix between Aspartame and Canola Oil. It's double recommended by the Global Food Council and the Population Council."

I feign ignorance, "Gee, why would the Population Council be recommending such a thing? I'm sure it won't make me sterile or give me cancer or anything like that."

My girlfriend kicks my shin under the table.

Undeterred, I continue, "How many synthetic ingredients does your Almost Pizza have?"

"Almost Pizza contains 177 synthetic ingredients."

"May I ask how many health problems those ingredients have been linked to?"

It's hard to make a robot look confused, but I pulled it off. "The Global Food Council does not make such information available."

I grin and persist, "What about the Population Council?"

"Negative"

So I order the reconstituted poop burger and my girl goes for the Almost Pizza. We watch the zombie customers, most of whom are immersed in some type of augmented reality gizmo. My girl and I are part of the extreme minority of humanity that still converses on a regular basis.

Two gorgeously presented products of science gone wrong appear before us. It's time to dig in.

Or maybe not. I see some extortion funded criminals in blue uniforms talking to the hostess. I tell my girl to look. Her eyes bulge out. They start to come our way.

I look into my girl's eyes, "I hate to eat on the run, but...."

I grab my poop burger and she grabs a couple slices of almost pizza pie and we dart out the back. We zig and zag to buy ourselves a few more cage-free moments.

We stop in an alleyway to catch our breath and take a bite of what these days passes for food. My girl asks, "That military psycho sent some rights-violating pawns our way, huh?"

"That's a safe bet, I'd say. How's your food?"

"I'm sorry we paid for it."

And for those of you wondering out there, no, we didn't dine and dash. The Yudollrubpounds will be automatically deducted from our account. The whole "pay with your face" thing. Makes you feel all warm and fuzzy, right?

So now we just got home, tired, sweaty, hungry, and financially poorer. Another day in the life in Evil Zombieland. But not just any day. This was our big night out on the town.

Episode 9

School

So I'm riding in an autonomous mini-transport pod with my teenage nephew. I have the privilege of accompanying him to his forced indoctrination center today. Actually, here in 2038, they're called Workforce Preparation Centers, and they're operated by a monolithic violence-backed institution of the state called Ongoing Occupation and Personnel Systems, or OOPS, as I prefer to call it.

But I digress. I'm honored, really, that my nephew chose me. This gives me hope. Ya see, I'm the only person in our family that's a conscious anarchist. I'm the only one who knows what true liberty is, sadly enough. Everyone else believes that a giant violence cartel called the state produces some vague notion of freedom.

I smile at my nephew, "It's nice to be in a transport again. I've been out of credits for weeks!"

"Why is that?" he asks.

"Cuz I get too many free speech fines."

We both laugh at my plight. It's good to be with family. "When was the last time you saw your parents?"

He considers for a moment. "A few months, I guess."

You see, here in 2038, schools run by the government gang are not just compulsory for a few hours a day like in the old days. Nope. Now children move into the prison camps at age 4 and stay there until they graduate around age 22 or 23. They visit their parents on occasion, but mostly old mom and pops are basically just donors of biological material and financial flotation devices for their offspring.

Our pod stops. We pop out. Our personal, state mandated drones meet us and begin to follow. I take a macro view of this extortion funded prison for children. I gotta hand it to the social engineers, these obedience training centers are very sleek, shiny, esthetically pleasing prisons.

I try to pay attention to the bit of nature interspersed with the cold, steely structures we're approaching. But it's too difficult. I can see the techno-toys of the panopticon. AI cameras. Multi-tiered levels of autonomous drones. Ubiquitous biomonitors.

"First stop," my lanky companion announces, "is the Wellness Emporium."

So much for the esthetically pleasing names. The Wellness Emporium is basically a dysgenecist's candy store. It's something that would make Orwell

and H.G. Wells blush deep purple. Thought scanners, DNA encoders and decoders, nano-you-name-its, blood synthesizers, and tons of other high-tech junk the state uses to keep its human flesh robots functioning at what scientific dictators consider optimal.

And what happens if an individual is deemed to be “beyond repair”? In 2038 parlance, it’s called “decommissioned”, which is a fuzzy sounding way to say “murdered”.

We step in and a synthetic nurse greets us. While my nephew is being poked and prodded, I ask, “So when someone doesn’t pass the tests, is it you that murders them, or is that someone else’s Satanic task?”

Her face twists, “Oh, such ugly rhetoric. Murder is a crime and we obviously don’t do that.”

I retort, “Well, to decommission and to murder are both to take a life of an individual against the will of that individual.”

A synthetic glare greets me, but she addresses my nephew, “Are you sure this hurtful man is your family? You’re such a good boy.”

A couple minutes later and we’re heading down a long, glowing corridor. “Where’s our next stop? Wanna get some synthetic vanilla smart ice?”

He shakes his head and laughs. “That’s why I like you the best, you’ve got that knack.”

“Knack?”

“For saying things people don’t expect. Anyway, the next stop is Allegiance Hall.”

I huff, “Sounds like a wonderful place for mind expansion.”

We step into “Allegiance Hall”, which basically looks like a miniature, high-tech version of the Roman Coliseum. There are thousands of blank-faced young victims organized in neat and orderly sections, all waiting obediently.

“So what do we do here?”

Shock envelops his pointy face, “You don’t know what we do in Allegiance Hall?”

“We didn’t have anything like that in school when I was growing up.”

“Well, you’re about to find out.”

A small gang of indoctrination specialists stands at the center of the affair. A puffy-faced, little old bald man takes center stage and greets his victims, "Good morning, workforce trainees."

A chorus greets back.

"All rise."

Everyone obeys. Then I find out what the allegiance is all about. In nauseatingly programmed unison, all of the young flesh robots dryly state from memory:

"I pledge allegiance, to the United Americas, and to the collective for which it stands, one people, under Gaia, indivisible, with privilege of survival for all."

Freshly horrified, I follow my young guide to our next torture center. It's time for Climate Science Class.

The indoctrination specialists are at the center of a giant circle. One humanoid, one flesh robot. All the young victims take their seats in chairs resembling that of Captain Picard's from Star Trek. Us lowly adults stand behind them.

The humanoid instructor announces, "Class, please plug in and download."

Yes, that's why they get those fancy captain's chairs. They're the matrix plug-in stations where info is downloaded directly into a cybernetic appendage. It's not a permanent implant, yet. But a safe bet is that that's the next step in the psychopathic control freak dark occultist plot to rule in hell.

I decide to have some fun. "Excuse me, just one question. Shouldn't learning have more interaction between individuals? More questions asked than answers and/or theories given? Have you ever heard of The Trivium?"

A stern look from the flesh, "That is an inconsiderate question."

"Well, could you give me an example of some info that these young minds are downloading?"

Her eyes shoot death beams at me, "Sure. I'd be happy to. For example, they're learning that Gaia must be kept at an optimum population in order to preserve Gaia for all."

"And what is the proof of that? What are your sources?"

Now she's really hot, "The International Gaia Foundation, of course! No more questions!"

"The Rothschild Family heavily funds that foundation."

“Enough!”

“Hey, in all fairness, that wasn’t a question.”

Fresh from his download, my nephew cracks up.

“No laughing!”

After that torture session and a brief insect-protein-delight break, it’s back to class. I announce, “I might not make it through this whole day.”

“Why not?”

“Because I’ll get kicked out for sure. That’ll be another proud moment on my anarchist CV. So what’s next?”

“Government.”

That’s it? Just government? I was expecting at least some flowery rhetoric to put on that BS sandwich.

A long-faced, scholarly looking guy sits at the center of the circle this time. He’s got 2 humanoid assistants. Gotta have extra help to teach violent authoritarianism, I guess.

I decide to run my mouth before he even starts. “Excuse me, brainwashing specialist, can you tell me the root, etymological meaning of the word government?”

“Of course! It means to govern benevolently!”

“No, no, that is horrifically incorrect. Where does that dark propaganda come from?”

He is taken aback. “Propaganda does not exist. And for your information, that definition comes from UNESCO.”

I smirk, “Ok, first of all, that is pure black propaganda. Second of all, UNESCO is a disgusting group of authoritarians who play a role in social engineering and the prohibition of freedom. Lastly, the definition of government is ‘mind control’. It’s a word formed from Latin roots. ‘Gubernare’ means to control, and ‘mens’ or ‘mentis’ means mind. Together, it is mind control. Boom! Truth!”

I don’t know if it was my sharing of knowledge, or my brash delivery of that knowledge that got me the boot, but that point is probably moot.

Should I feel guilty for getting kicked out? For cutting short my rare visit with my nephew? It is disappointing, but hey, isn’t spreading truth more important?

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James Bong - Agent of Anarchy

The C.A. Salt Project

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